VISIT…

Dover Coloring Book

Amazing Animals

RUTH SOFFER

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps one of the most amazing things about animals is that so many different varieties exist, each with its own remarkable traits and abilities. Some of the 46 animals depicted in this book are quite unlike any other creature found on the planet. Other creatures-with-special-features are members of a larger group of related animals that are familiar to most people. Some of these amazing animals are found on more than one continent, or, like the cheetah and the ostrich, flourish in several different kinds of environment. Others are found only in one small territory that provides an unusual habitat, such as the giant tortoises of the Galapagos Islands and the aye-aye, a unique prosimian found only in the vestiges of coastal rain forests on the large island of Madagascar. Each of them is outstanding—and surprising—in some way.

The platypus, one of only two kinds of animals classified as monotremes, is an egg-laying, furry mammal with what appears to be a duck's bill as part of its face. Other truly astonishing animals are the capybara (a giant rodent that sometimes grazes much like a cow), the basilisk lizard (which can "walk" on water), and the matamata turtle (which "vacuums" up its meals), all dwellers in South America. The giraffe, which is native to Africa only, is much better known. Its nearest relatives—none of which can rival the giraffe's long neck or its knobby horns—are animals that are native to South America only: the alpaca, guanaco, llama, and vicuña.

Flying squirrels frolic in the woodlands of Europe and North America; in Asia, some giant varieties exist. The ocean around the continent of Australia is home to amazing creatures such as the crown-of-thorns starfish, the blue-ringed octopus, the giant cuttlefish, and the whale shark.

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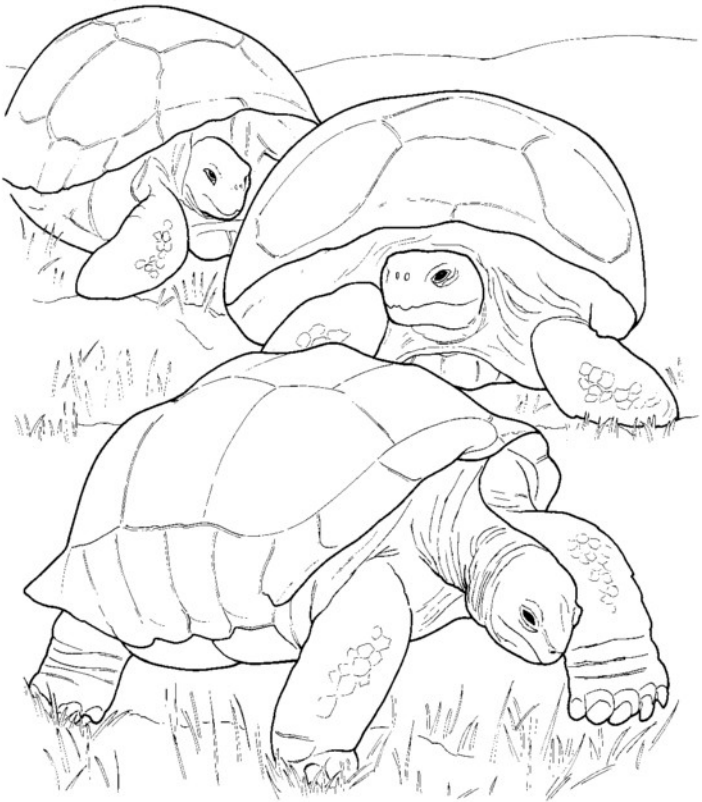
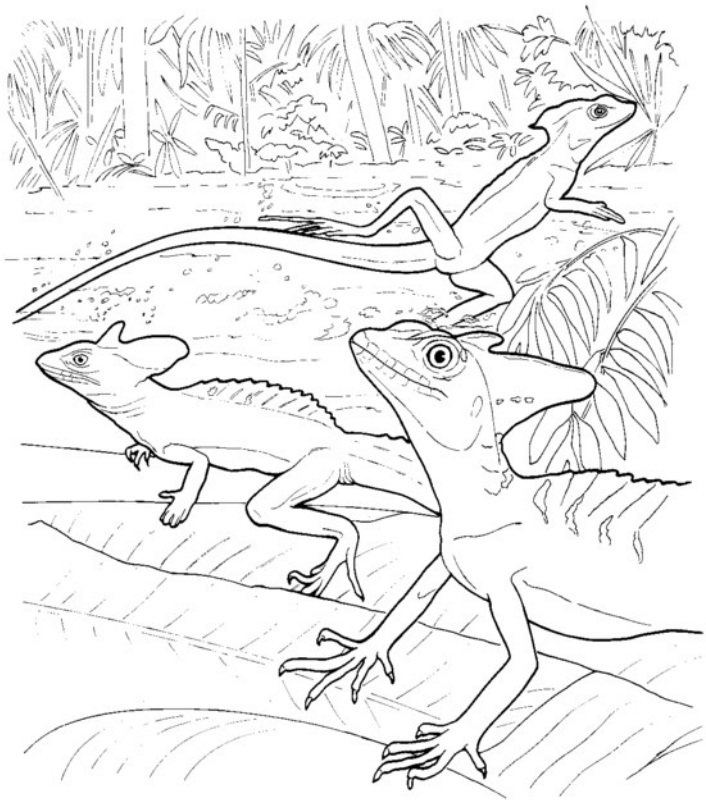
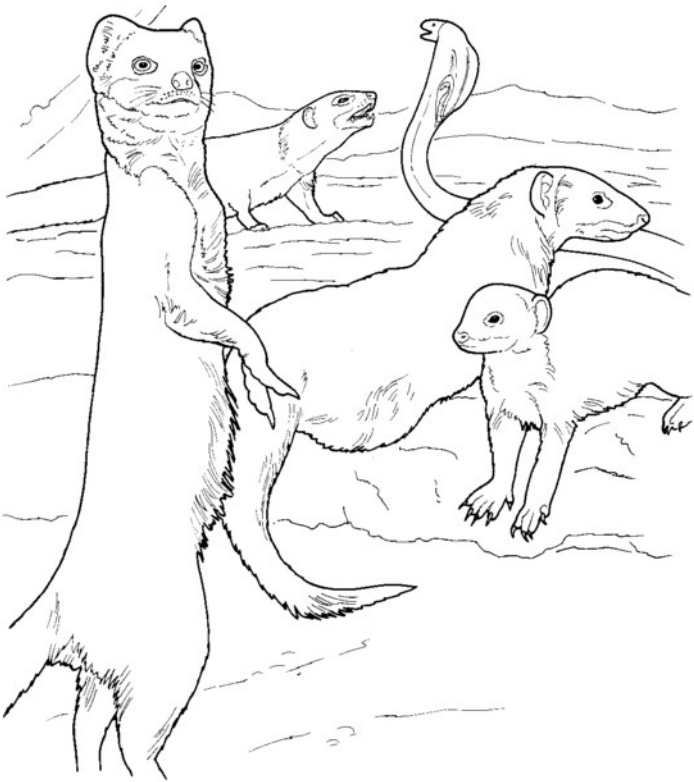
The **Widowbird** or Whydah (*Euplectes* species) lives in Africa. The male Widowbird, which is about 6 inches long, displays a 20-inch tail during the mating season and flies with it aloft. Amazingly, each of 15 Widowbird species chooses a single species of weaver finch as "foster parents" and deposits its eggs in the other birds' nests to be hatched. Not only that, the Widowbird hatchlings match the host species in the colors and the patterns of spots seen inside the open mouth, and they make the same head movements and calls when begging for food. Thus the adult birds think the foster nestlings are their own and feed them.



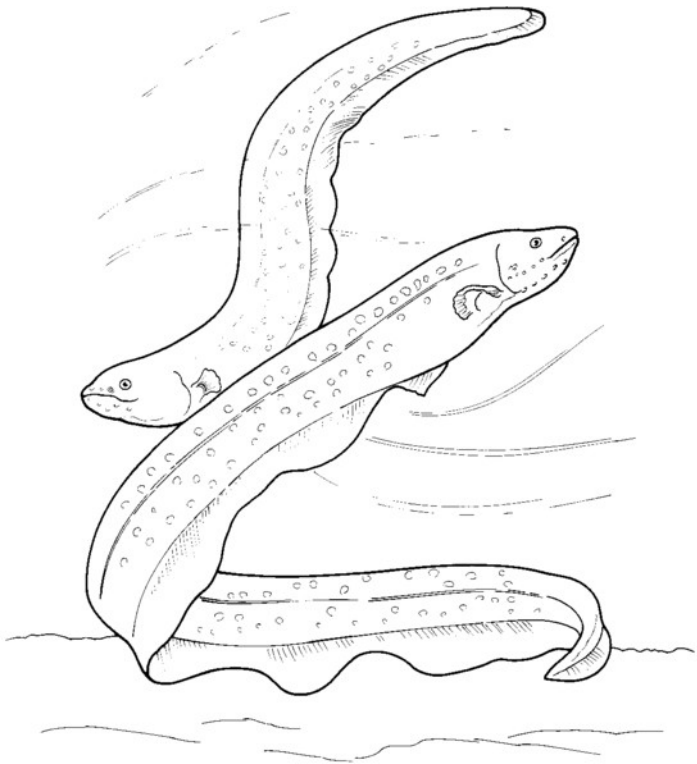
The **Giant Galapagos Tortoise** *(Geochelone elephantopus)* population on the Galapagos Islands in the Pacific Ocean west of Ecuador was very large before Europeans began visiting the islands, but the tortoise population was decimated during the nineteenth century by the crews of whalers and other ships. These tortoises may be as much as 5 feet long and 2½ feet high, and may weigh up to 300 pounds. They live on land, move very slowly, and have a very long life span when not killed by humans.



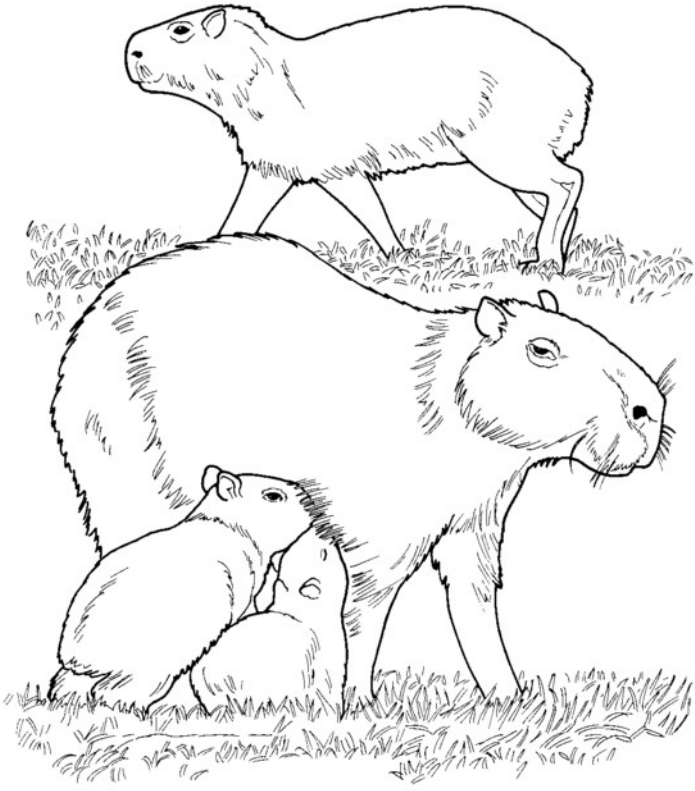
The **Green Crested Basilisk Lizard** *(Basiliscus plumifrons)* is one of four species, including *Basiliscus basiliscus* and the Striped Basilisk Lizard, *Basiliscus vittatus*, that live in trees in tropical America. Males may be 2½ feet long and are not lightweights, but these lizards astonishingly can run across rivers and ponds on their long hind legs, without sinking. The big hind feet have flaps of skin on each toe. Apparently the lizard runs so quickly that it covers a substantial distance before its feet break the surface tension of the water. These lizards are excellent swimmers and can stay submerged for long periods to flee from danger or to hide. Males have a high, narrow crest along their upper body.



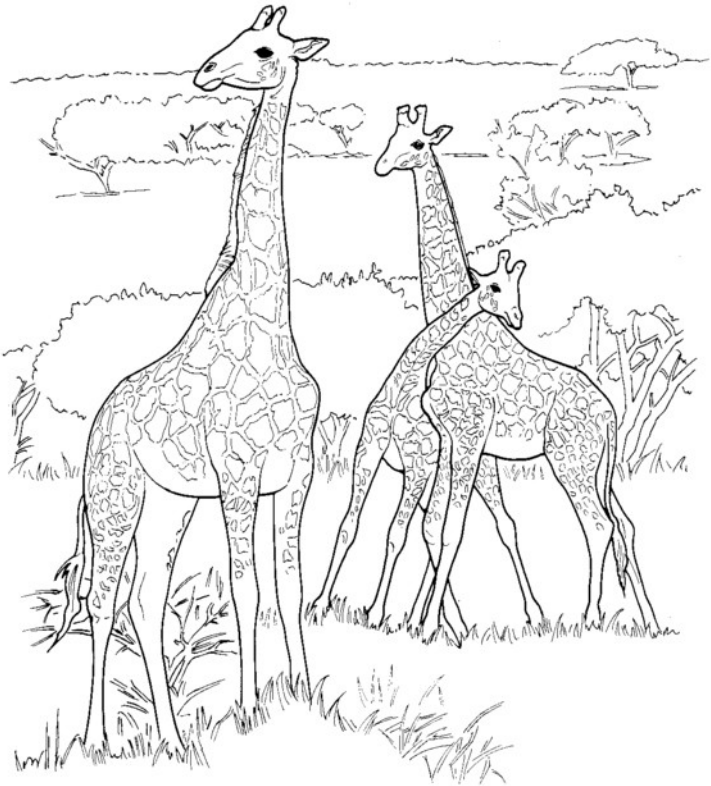
Three species of Mongoose have been famed for millennia as snake killers. They are the **Indian Gray Mongoose** *(Herpestes edwardsi)*, the **Javan Mongoose** *(Herpestes javanicus)*, and the **Ichneumon** or Egyptian Mongoose *(Herpestes ichneumon)*. The Mongoose's great agility and quick reflexes help it to win deadly struggles with cobras. Also, the amount of cobra's venom it takes to kill a mongoose is eight times the amount that kills a rabbit. The Mongoose was brought to Hawaii and some Caribbean islands to kill rats. Besides being an effective eradicator of pests, the Mongoose is playful and enjoys hiding and seeking.



The **Electric Eel** *(Electrophorus electricus)* is not an eel at all, but a fish that lives in the rivers of northern South America, in slow-flowing or stagnant waters that are oxygen-poor. It occasionally rises to the surface and gulps air, from which the oxygen is absorbed by special blood vessels in the mouth. Electric eels generally are up to 6 feet long; some are much longer. The tail comprises about seven-eighths of the body length. It houses one large and two smaller "batteries" that enable the Electric Eel to deliver a shock of as much as 550 volts to any animal, fish, or human being within reach. The Electric Eel has no dorsal fin, but a long, shallow fin on its underside enables it to swim forward, backward, and vertically.



Few people think of giant rodents as being at home on the range, but the **Capybara** *(Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris)*, a native of southern South America, sometimes grazes in pastureland alongside cattle. Generally the hefty rodent, which may weigh up to 250 pounds, likes to live near water in woods with thick undergrowth. It swims and dives well, and will stand belly-deep in water, grazing on aquatic plants. The capybara does not burrow. It is active at twilight and becomes nocturnal when living near humans.



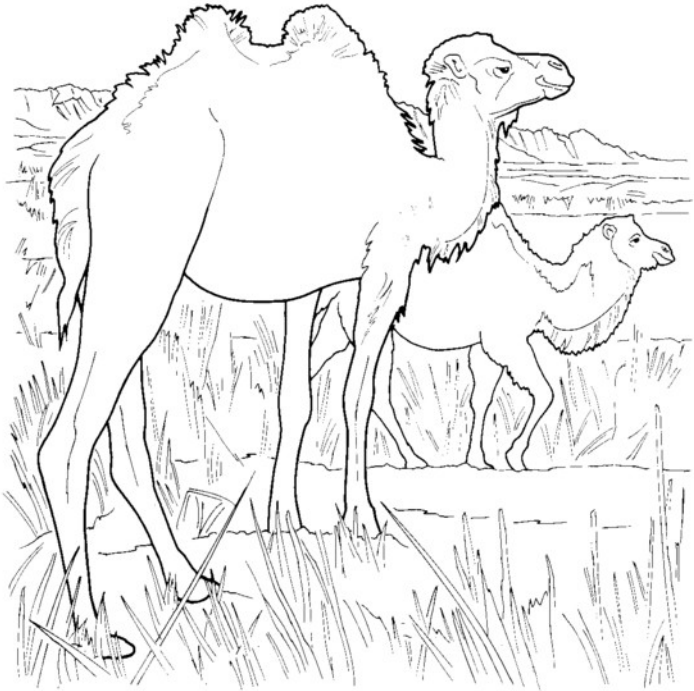
The **Giraffe** *(Giraffa camelopardalis)* is the only animal with a pair of horns atop the head of females as well as males. The unusual horns are short, blunt-tipped, and covered with skin. Giraffes, up to 18 feet tall, eat leaves and buds of thorny acacia trees in their African habitat. To drink water, the giraffe must spread its long forelegs wide apart or bend them. Valves in the large artery of its long neck enable it to avoid fatal changes in blood pressure when it lowers and raises its head. Giraffes sleep deeply only for brief periods, resting with three legs tucked beneath the body, one hind leg stretched out to the side, and the neck curved backward over the body, with the jaw resting on the outstretched shin.

Townsend's Big-Eared Bat *(Plecotus townsendii)* has giant ears more than half as long as its body. Even better than other bat species, Big-Eared Bats use echolocation (the ability to interpret sounds that "bounce off" nearby objects) to orient themselves and to find objects. They can fly without crashing into anything, even when it is too dark to see. Bats are the only mammals that truly can fly. Townsend's Big-Eared Bats catch small moths on the wing. They live in caves and abandoned mine shafts in the U.S. west.

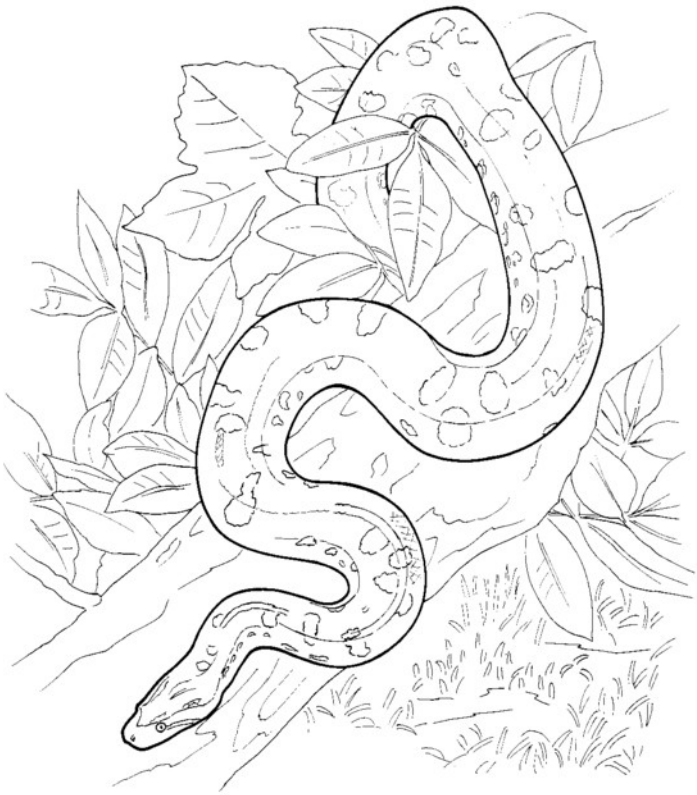
The **Komodo Dragon** *(Varanus komodoensis)* is the largest existing lizard. Males may grow to 10 feet in length and weigh as much as 300 pounds. This "land crocodile" was not known outside its only habitat, four small Indonesian islands (one named Komodo), until 1912. Adult Komodo Dragons mainly eat carrion, but are thought to kill deer, pigs, and monkeys as well. These giant lizards eat large meals and gulp down very large, unchewed mouthfuls. They sometimes take long rest periods to digest these meals.

When it feels threatened, a **Canadian** or **North American Porcupine** *(Erethizon dorsatum)* turns its back to the attacker, arches its back, and lashes out with the long, sharp quills on its tail. In some porcupine species the quills are barbed; they cannot be pulled out without causing much damage. Worse yet, the quills often work their way deeper into the victim quickly, sometimes causing death. The New World porcupines of the Americas are arboreal, unlike the ground-dwelling Old World porcupines (family Hystricidae). Porcupines are nocturnal forest-dwelling rodents that mainly eat buds, leaves, twigs, pine needles, and tree bark. Five prehensile-tail species (without spines on their tails) live in trees in South America.

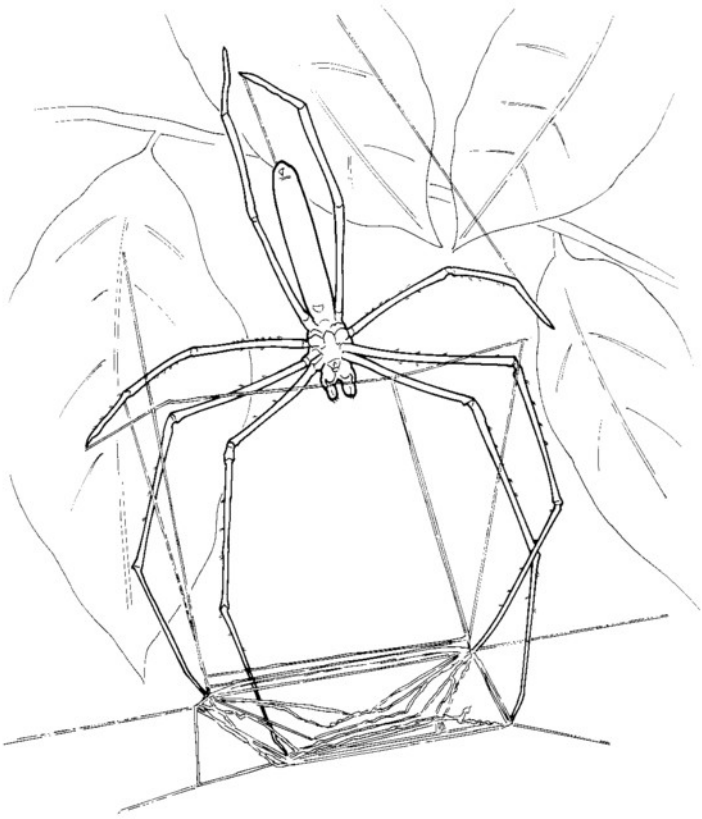
The three species of **Three-Toed Sloth** (*Bradypus tridactylus, B. variegatus,* and the rare Maned Sloth, *B. torquatus,* found only in southeastern Brazil) actually are three-fingered sloths. (All sloths have three toes on each foot, but some have only two fingers on each hand.) Sloths are very slow-moving, leaf-eating tree-dwellers. They move about very little, having a metabolism rate only half that of other mammals of similar size. They eat so much low-energy food that their stomachs are a large portion of their body size and weight. Sloths' long, curved claws help them to climb trees and to cling to them upside-down.



The **Wild Camel** *(Camelus ferus ferus)* is one of two subspecies of two-humped camel native to Central Asia, where temperatures often are very low. A few Wild Camels remain in the Gobi Desert. The domesticated two-humped camel is called the **Bactrian Camel** *(Camelus ferus bactrianus)*. Camels can live much longer than people or horses without drinking water, but it is not true that they draw on liquid stored in a special compartment of their stomach, nor that they survive thirst by metabolizing fat stored in their humps. Probably this ability to endure is related to the fact that, even when a camel loses a quarter of its body weight because of not drinking, the water content of the blood is reduced by only 10 percent.



The **Anaconda** or Water Boa *(Eunectes murinus)* lives in South America, near rivers and in swampy areas east of the Andes Mountains. This snake may be as much as 20 feet long. It kills some of its victims by lying in wait at a river's edge, grabbing animals that come to drink, and drowning them. On land, it wraps itself around an animal and applies pressure so that the victim's chest cannot expand to enable it to breathe. Females usually give birth to 20–40 live young, but as many as 100 may be born at a time.

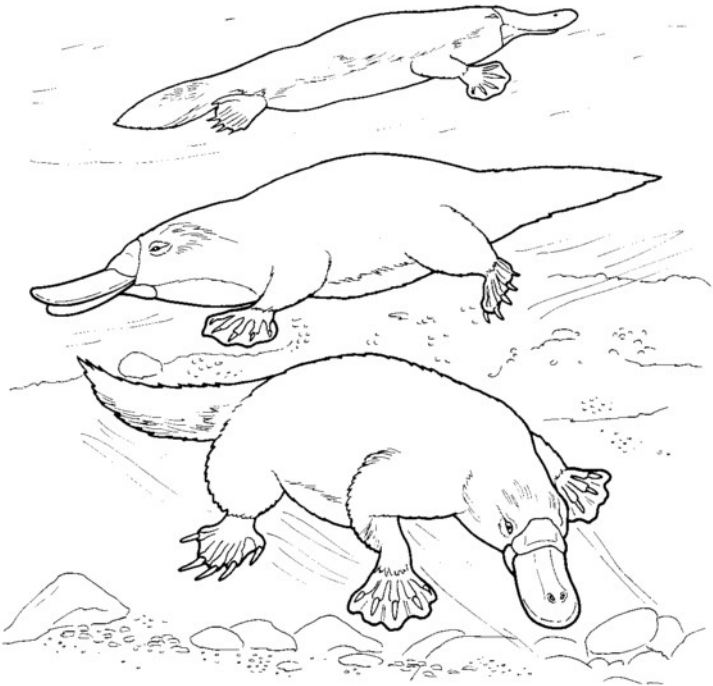


The **Net-Casting Spider** or Net-Nabber *(Deinopis longipes)* also is known as the Ogre-Faced Spider, perhaps because of the huge eyes at the front of its head, besides the three other pairs of eyes that most spiders have. During the day the Net-Casting Spider easily can be mistaken for a branch segment with slender twigs (the spider's eight legs) emanating from it. At night the spider hunts, hanging upside-down and casting a net that it weaves between its two front legs. It dwells in tropical forests from Mexico to Panama.

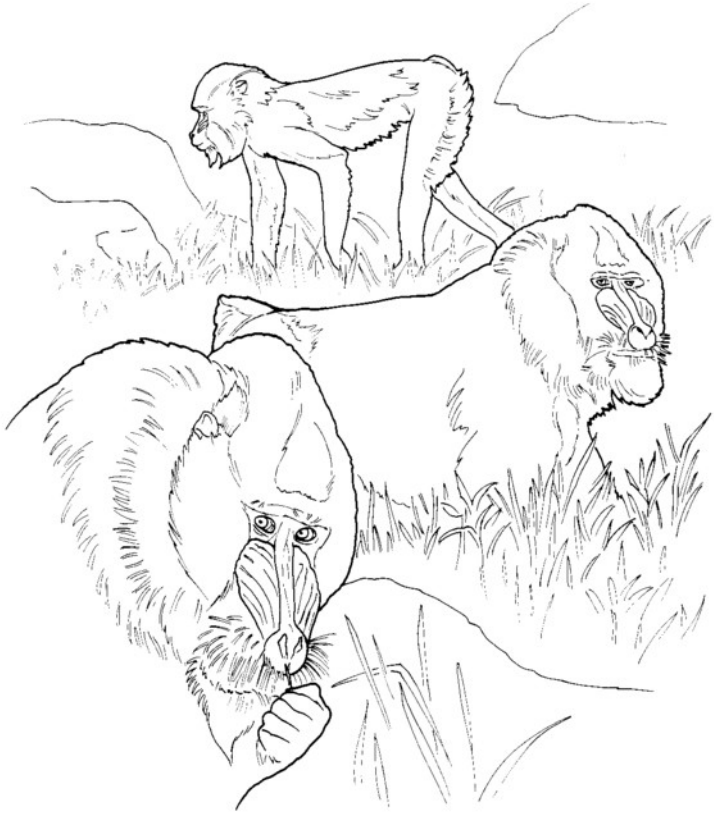
The approximately 300 species of **Scorpionfish** (family Scorpaenidae) are very varied in appearance. They live in both shallow and deep ocean waters, mainly in temperate zones. Some are quite beautiful while others are bizarre in appearance. These species have in common poisonous spines that form part of their divided or fringed fins. These poisonous spines are used to defeat predators, not to kill other fish. In most species the female gives birth to live young—often in very large numbers (the eggs hatch within the female's body). Although people may avoid eating some scorpionfish species because they seem hideous, some of them are caught and processed as food, both by individuals and in commercial fishing operations.

The **Aye-aye** *(Daubentonia madagascariensis)* is a lemur, found only in a dwindling rain-forest habitat in coastal areas of the large island of Madagascar, off the east coast of Africa. A nocturnal creature, it likes to live in bamboo thickets. The very long, withered-looking middle finger on each of its hands is used to retrieve the aye-aye's main food, beetle larvae, from deep within tree trunks. The aye-aye has sharp claws on each finger and toe, except the thumb and the big toe. The fact that folklore says that a person who kills an aye-aye will die within a year tended to preserve this rare creature, but the aye-aye only gives birth to a single offspring every two years, and has been threatened with extinction for decades.

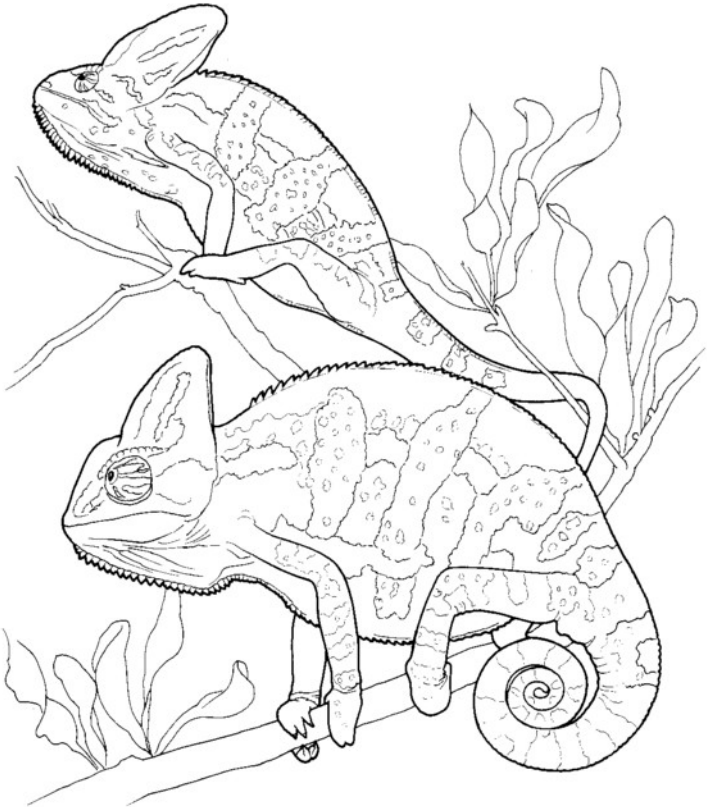
The **Horned Lizard** (*Phrynosoma* species), a lizard with the face of a toad, usually is erroneously called the Horned Toad. A dozen species live in southwestern Canada, in the western United States, and in Mexico. The "Horned Toad" is famed for squirting blood from its eyes. Few people actually have seen this occur, but in rare cases, male Horned Lizards that were sloughing off their old skin have been observed to do this. Why and precisely how this happens is unknown. The lizard is named for the spines on its head, which point backward. Smaller spines line its back, and thorny scales also are part of the creature's armor. When a snake kills and swallows a Horned Lizard, the snake often dies in turn, internally lacerated by the spines.



The **Platypus** *(Ornithorhynchus anatinus)* is one of two kinds of monotremes, the only mammals that lay eggs. Platypus eggs have soft shells. The female gives milk to its young, like other mammals. When the skin of a platypus first was brought to Europe, scientists as well as the general public thought the specimen was a fraud, produced by attaching a duck's bill to the skin of some furry mammal. Platypuses live in fresh water in Australia and nearby Tasmania. They spend about 40 percent of their time swimming underwater, hunting small animals and fish. While hunting, the platypus rises to the surface to breathe through nostrils in the upper surface of its duck-like bill. It digs long burrows entered directly from the water.



The **Mandrill** *(Papio sphinx)* lives in African forests, foraging for food during the day, mainly on the ground. At night it sleeps in a tree. The startlingly bright colors of this ape's face and body become more brilliant when the animal is excited. In fact, when the mandrill is greatly excited, colors that are not normally present appear, such as blue patches on the chest and red dots on the wrists and ankles.

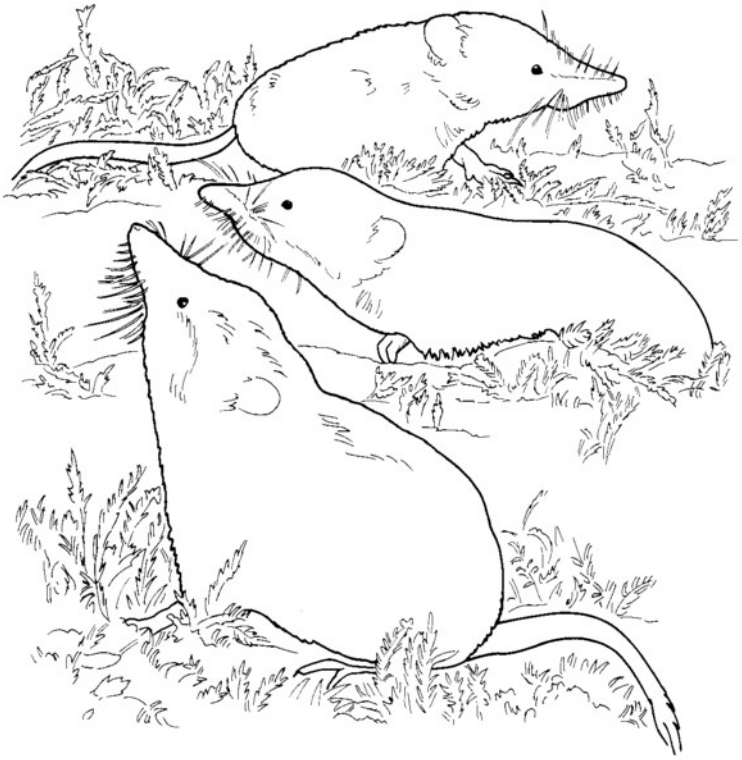


The **Veiled Chameleon** or Yemen Chameleon (*Chamaeleo calyptertus*) actually has not a veil, but a casque or helmet, which may be 2 inches high, atop its head. This animal is brightly colored but can camouflage itself in various surroundings. It lives in dry woods and grasslands in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Males are 20–24 inches long, females about half that size. A prehensile tail and two opposing groups of toes on each foot adapt this chameleon to life in trees. Females deposit 30–70 eggs after digging down to damp soil. Hatchlings emerge six to eight months later, tunnel to the surface, and head for a tree.

The **Calliope Hummingbird** *(Stellula calliope)* is the smallest bird that lives in North America. Individuals vary in length from about 2¾ inches to about 3¼ inches. These hummingbirds tend to live along streams in high meadows and also in canyons in the mountains, in the western United States and Mexico. The male has magenta feathers extending from the chin to the upper chest in a streaky or V-shape pattern. His other plumage is green above and white below, with greenish flanks and brownish tail feathers. These tiny hummingbirds migrate seasonally over large distances, even from Mexico to Canada.

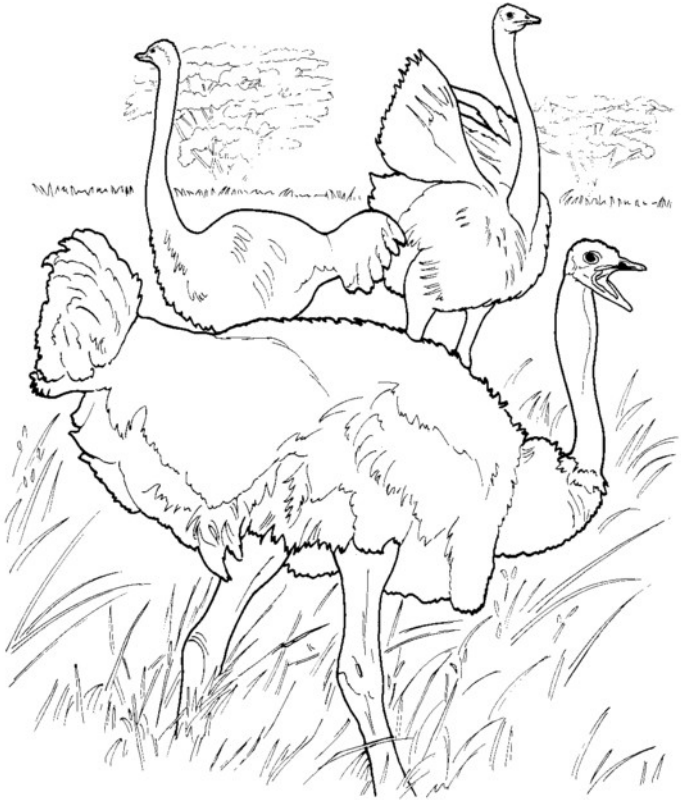
The **Great Pied Hornbill** (*Buceros bicornis*, shown) and the Malabar Pied Hornbill (*Anthracoceros coronatus*), 2 of the world's 54 hornbill species, live in the Western Ghats region of India. All hornbills have unusual bills and casques, and striking plumage. They also have unique nesting habits: the female blocks up the opening of the nest (usually in a cavity in an old tree), leaving only a narrow slit through which the male feeds her and the nestlings. The breeding season lasts about 100 days. Any disturbance near the nest will stop the male from returning with food. The Great Pied Hornbill also lives in other areas of southern Asia.

The **Flying Squirrel** (*Glaucomys sabrinus*, the Northern Flying Squirrel, and *Glaucomys volans*, the Southern Flying Squirrel, in North America, and *Pteromys volans* in Europe) does not truly fly, but glides from one tree to another in its forest habitat. Several species, including some giant varieties, are found in Asia. Flying Squirrels can glide long distances by spreading membranes that extend between their fore and hind legs. When it lands on a tree trunk, the Flying Squirrel instantly darts to the other side, probably to evade any owl or other predator that may be nearby. Playful Flying Squirrels have been sighted gliding about in large groups, but these nocturnal creatures never are seen by most people.

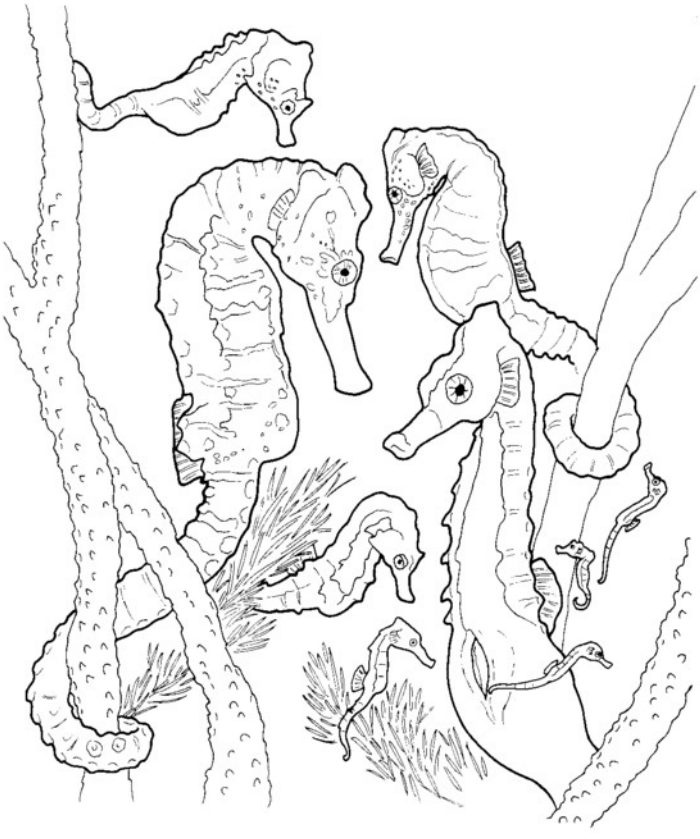


The numerous Shrew species (family Soricidae) are tiny mammals with pointed snouts. **Savi's Pygmy Shrew** *(Suncus etruscus)* is the smallest existing mammal. Shrews have been described as "voracious" and "ferocious" carnivores. On their own small scale, they spread devastation among the insects that form their diet. Some species have poisonous saliva. In order to be able to maintain their body temperature and to have sufficient energy for their activities, shrews often eat more than their body weight daily.

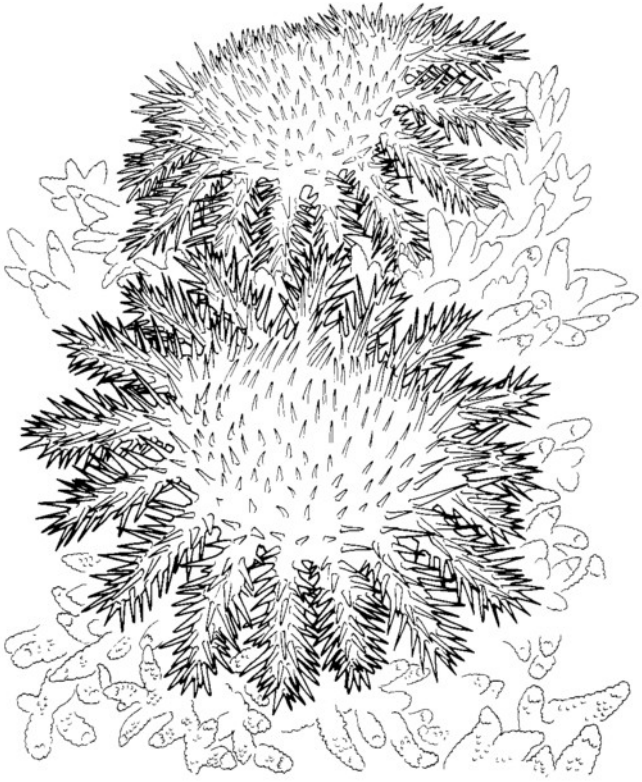
The **Common Peafowl** or Indian Peafowl *(Pavo cristatus)* lives in forests and in areas of scrub vegetation in India and on the island of Sri Lanka, south of India. The male's splendid display of fanned-out tail feathers is used primarily in courtship, not to indicate territorial dominance or aggression in encounters with other males. The peacock's iridescent body plumage is blue and green. The bird has black-and-white markings on the head, and a white bill. The crown of the head is green, and the crest is topped with blue formations. The large base from which the enormous tail fans out is brown.



A male **Ostrich** *(Struthio camelus)* may be as much as 9 feet tall. This flightless bird may weigh almost 350 pounds, but it runs swiftly and jumps high on long, strong legs, which can deliver mighty kicks. The wings help maintain the bird's balance when it runs. The legend that an ostrich "buries its head in the sand," thinking that it thus is hidden from a pursuer, probably is a result of the bird's habit of sometimes stopping to sit down and stretch its neck along the ground when it has run far ahead of a pursuer. Ostriches live in African deserts, bushlands, and savannas. The male shares the job of incubating the large, heavy ostrich eggs by sitting on them. An ostrich sleeps lightly at night with its neck upright, but once or more, for a few minutes, it lays its neck on the ground, stretches its legs out behind its body, and sleeps deeply.

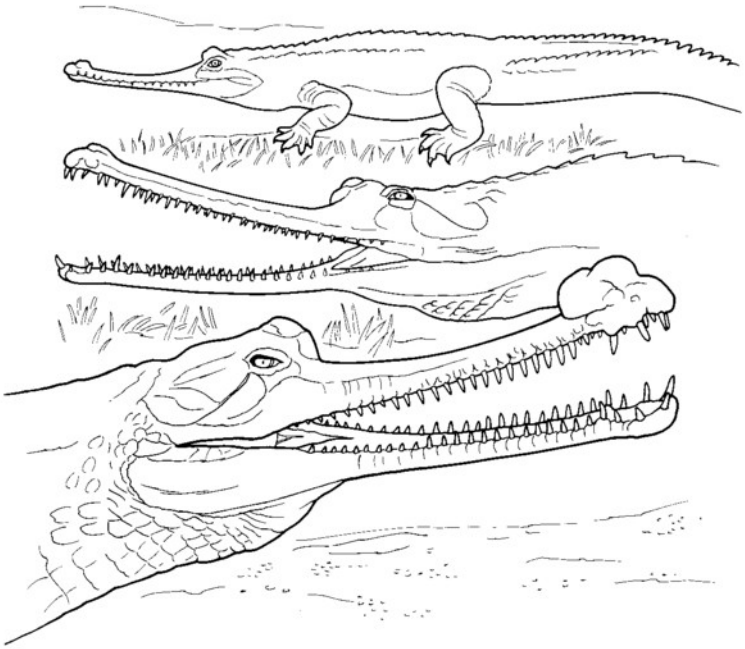


The **Sea Horse** species (*Hippocampus* species) are related to Pipefish, but Sea Horses' snouts are at right angles to their bodies. They have prehensile tails and a small dorsal fin for swimming. The male Sea Horse is extra-involved in successful reproduction. The female deposits the eggs into a pouch in the male's body. He carries the eggs in this protective pouch for four to six weeks, until the young hatch and are expelled from an opening behind his anal opening. Breeding may occur three times a year.



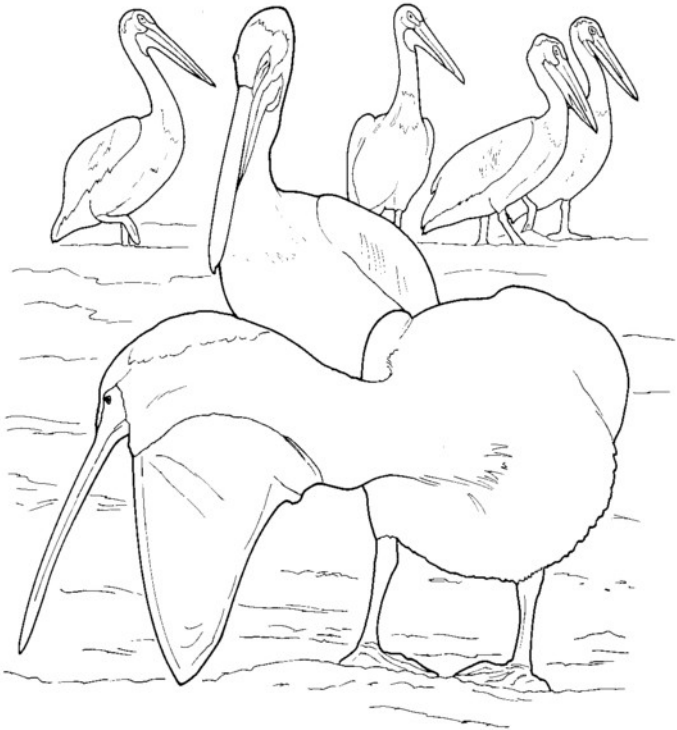
The **Crown-of-Thorns Starfish** *(Acanthaster planci)* is quite large (usually 10–15 inches in diameter, but as much as 31 inches) and has 14–18 arms, which can regenerate within months if damaged. This voracious eater of stone corals (tiny animals that form coral reefs) is named for its many long, sharp spines. Its mouth is at the center of the underside of the disk from which the arms extend. To eat, the starfish forces its stomach out through its mouth. An enzyme dissolves the coral tissue, releasing stored nutrients. Starfish "outbreaks," during which they eat enormous segments of coral reef, can last one to five years. The Crown-of-Thorns Starfish has many tube "feet" on its underside, which are tipped with suction cups. There are light-sensing eyespots at the tip of each arm. The Great Barrier Reef near Australia has been food for this starfish.

The iridescent **Diamond Weevil** *(Entimus imperialis)*, found only in eastern Brazil, appears to wear diamond chips on bands of black velvet alternating with soft green bands. It is about ¼ inch long. The multitudes of weevil species also are known as snout beetles. Besides having mouth parts on their oddly shaped snouts, they have a pair of antennae that fold at an "elbow." In some species the antennae can lie in special grooves in the snout. Many weevils are notorious agricultural pests.

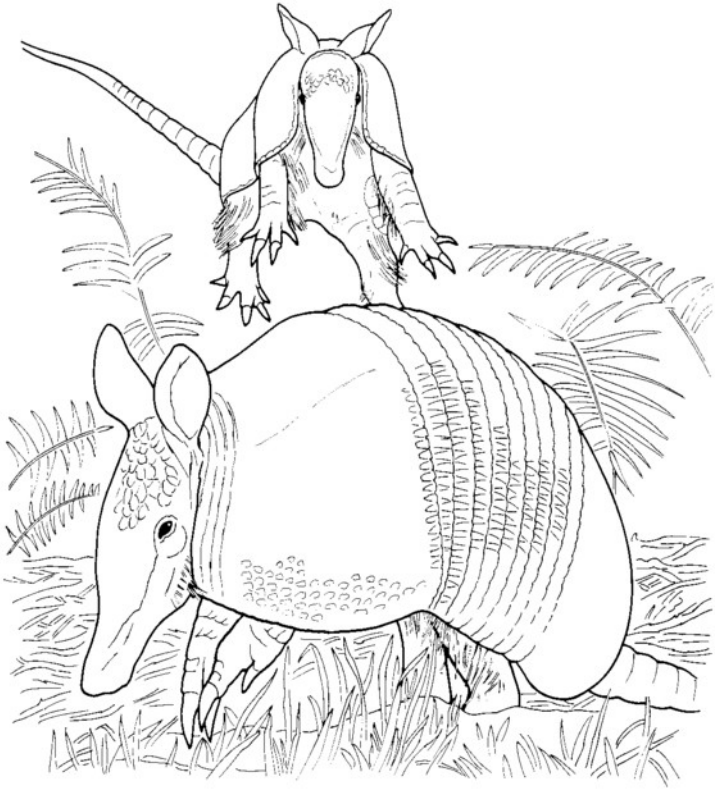


The **Gharial**, often called the Gavial *(Gavialis gangeticus)*, is a 20-foot-long crocodile relative (and endangered species) that lives in major rivers of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Nepal. Its long, slender snout is lined with small, sharp teeth that point backward. Near the snout's tip is a bony growth that develops when the reptile is 12 years old—a feature found on fossilized remains of a much-larger extinct variety of crocodile. The gharial captures small fish with quick sideways movements of its snout and swims rapidly, using its muscular tail. It frequently belches, growls, and hisses. Hatchlings are more than a foot long.

The **Harpy Eagle** *(Harpia harpyja)*, which is rarely seen, usually enters its nest from below, up high in the canopy of tropical American rain forests. Its short, broad wings enable it to fly surprisingly quickly among the trees. The Harpy Eagle's mottled black-and-white coloration, with some gray areas, helps it to blend in with the trunk and branches of the tall silk-cotton tree, in which it prefers to nest. A female may weigh about 20 pounds. The Harpy Eagle has four strong, curved talons, one much longer than the others. Its short, down-curved beak also is a formidable weapon. The female Harpy Eagle lays only one egg each breeding season, and young eagles do not hunt prey for themselves during most of their first year.

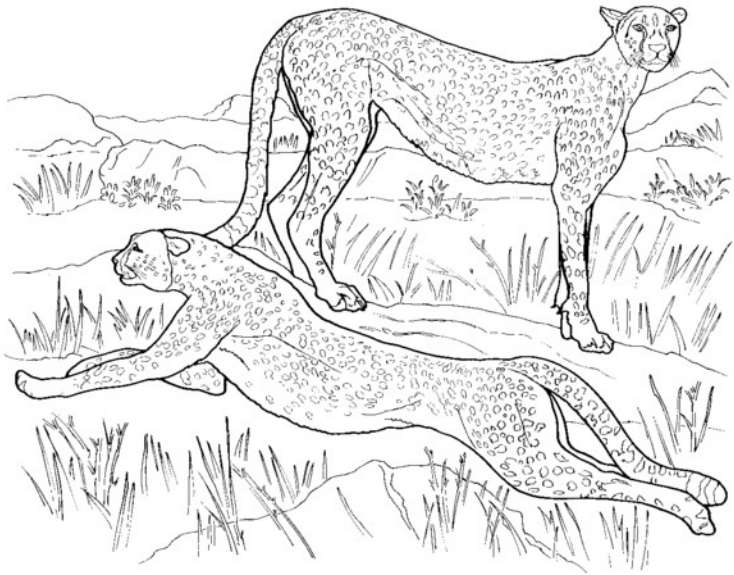


The **American White Pelican** *(Pelecanus erythrorhynchos)*, notable for the roomy pouch behind its long bill, nests near fresh water, from southern Canada to southern Mexico (only in western U.S. states). It spends winters by the sea, often near the Gulf of Mexico. The pelican's expandable pouch, which may be more than 21 inches long, is used to hold small fish caught while the bird is swimming (these pelicans do not dive for fish). The pouch also is the receptacle for regurgitated food, which the adult birds deliver to nourish their young. An American White Pelican may be 6 feet long, have a 9-foot wingspan, and weigh more than 17 pounds. During breeding season the male has a disc projection on the upper surface of the beak.

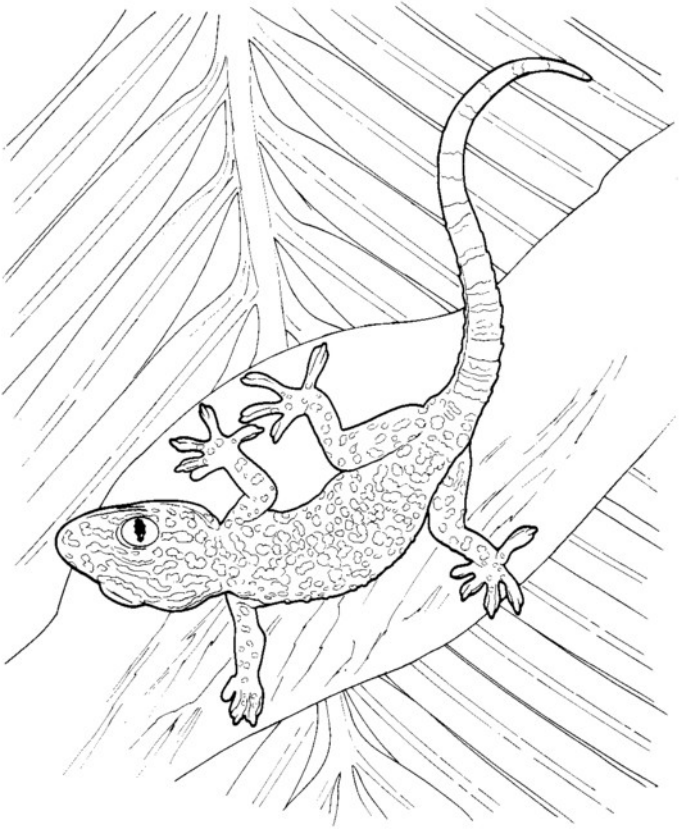


The **Common Long-Nosed Armadillo**, also known as the Nine-Banded Armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), lives in areas from the southwestern United States to Argentina. Its armor consists of bony plates overlaid by horn. The animal's underside is the only part of its body that is not armored. Armadillos dig in the ground for small vertebrates and insects. A single animal has been known to eat more than 40,000 ants at one meal. The armadillo's long, sticky tongue is extended into the ants' nest. The female Common Long-Nosed Armadillo usually gives birth to four young of the same gender.

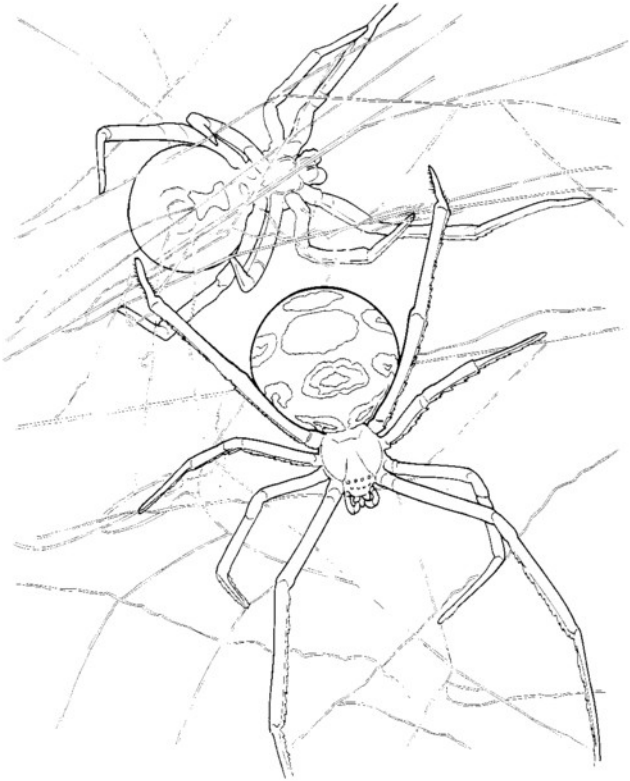
Albatrosses (*Diomedea* species) are large, heavy seabirds. The wingspan of the **Wandering Albatross** (*D. exulans*) may be 11½ feet and the bird may weigh more than 26 pounds. Albatrosses mainly fly over the ocean. Their bones are full of air spaces. They have webbed feet and oily, waterproof feathers. These huge birds drink seawater, eliminating most of the salt through nasal glands. Most albatrosses consume plenty of squids, even the horny beaks, but Wandering Albatrosses also follow ships for days to pick up discarded food. This bird does not breed until it is at least 7 years old, and then only once in two years. A single egg is incubated for 73 days. A young albatross cannot fly until it is 9 months old.



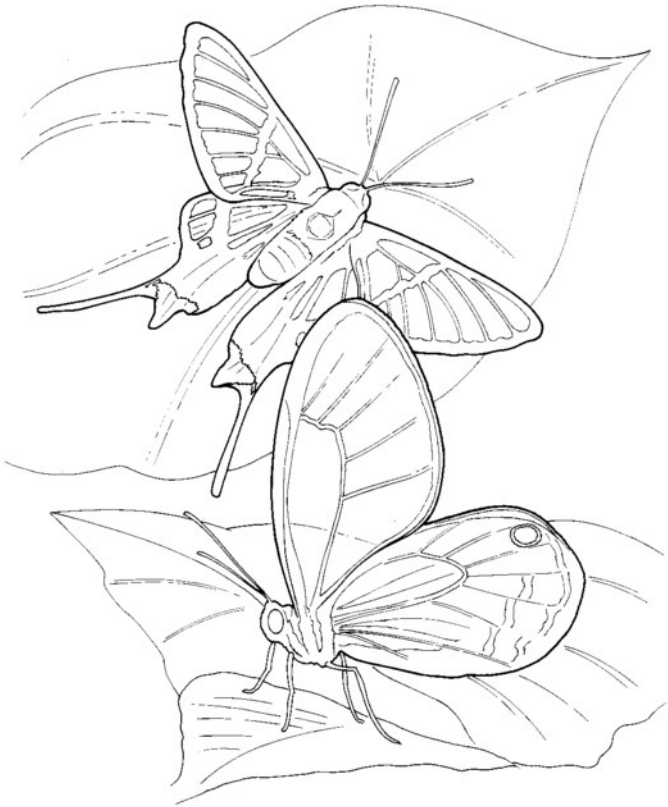
The **Cheetah** *(Acinonyx jubatus)*, the fastest-running mammal, was used as a hunting animal by the ancient Sumerians, the Egyptian pharaohs, and later rulers such as Kublai Khan, Akbar, and William the Conqueror. Cheetahs can accelerate very quickly to great speed, but can maintain top speed only briefly. Classified as a small feline, the cheetah has nonretractable claws, narrow paws, and relatively long legs. It can jump high, but cannot climb well. It hunts by creeping relatively near to its prey, taking advantage of the camouflage effect of its spotted skin, and then runs to leap at the prey. Cheetahs live in African grasslands and woodlands and in areas of scrub vegetation; one species is native to Asia.



The **Tokay Gecko** or Great House Gecko *(Gekko gecko)*, found in India and eastern Asia, may be 10 inches long or more. Despite its rather large size it can walk up vertical walls and even upside-down across ceilings, by means of ridged pads on its feet. The Great House Gecko is popular in and around homes, as it eats many insect pests. Its upper body is gray or reddish-gray, speckled with small violet-red spots. When in danger this gecko inflates its body, takes a rigid stance, and emits a loud bark or croak with a metallic tone.

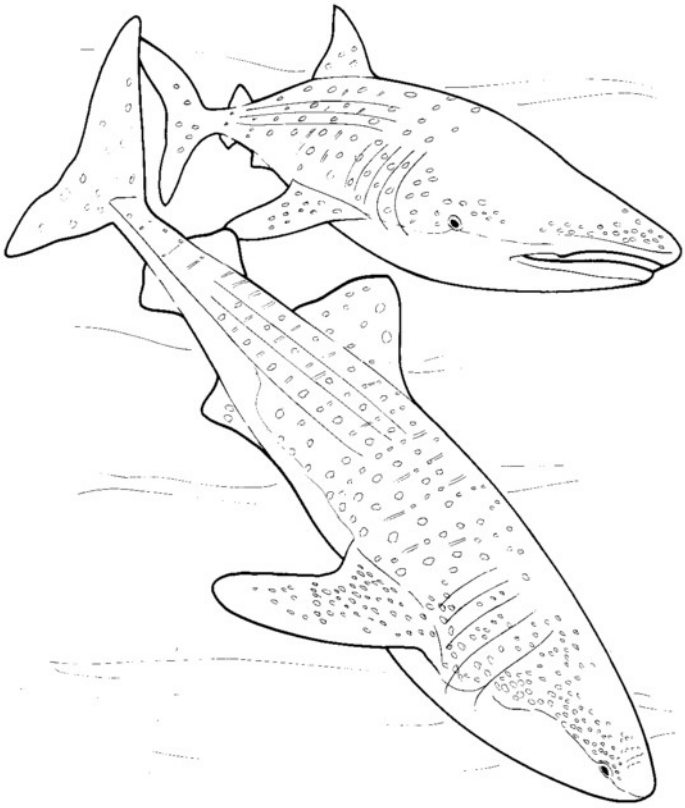


The **Red Widow Spider** (*Latrodectus bishopi*, foreground) weaves its webs only among the palmettos of central and southern Florida. The poisonous female's legs and head-thorax section are red, but her bulbous abdomen is brown with white-bordered orange patches and one red mark. The Black Widow Spider (*Latrodectus mactans*, background) is widespread in the southeastern United States and the Caribbean. The black female has a red, hourglass-shape marking on her underside. Her bite is very venomous. The male, about a third her size, is pale and does not bite. A female Black Widow can defeat a scorpion, much larger than she, by throwing gummy silk at it. Black Widows live in buildings, stony places, garbage dumps, latrines, etc. The female of both species of "widow" spider usually eats the male after mating.

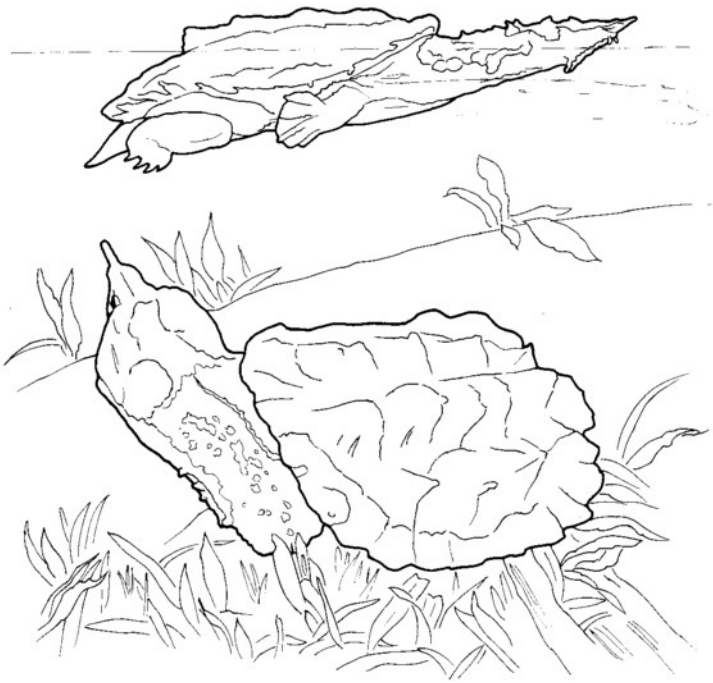


The Glasswing Butterfly (more than a dozen *Cithaerias* species and at least three *Haetera* species) lives in Central and South America. These butterflies' wings are completely transparent, except for opaque colorful patches and spots on the hind wings. The butterflies are very hard to see when they alight, and even when they are in flight only their bright patches or spots draw attention to their movements. They tend to fly slowly, early in the morning and sometimes in the evening. These species were remarked on by the famous naturalists Darwin and Bates in the Amazon region during the nineteenth century. Their wings are transparent because the scales on them are so thin. The butterflies' bodies are especially slender.

The **Blue Poison-Dart Frog** *(Dendrobates azureus)*, with its royal-blue hue, is unusual even among the poison-dart frogs, which often are bright red or yellow in color. These amphibians are not well prepared to camouflage themselves in the foliage of the Amazon rain forest where they live, but they don't need to hide. Their vivid coloration serves to warn would-be predators that these frogs should not be chosen as snack food, because they contain a deadly poison. Native Americans apply the venom from frogs of the various *Dendrobates* species to darts that they use as weapons in hunting larger animals.

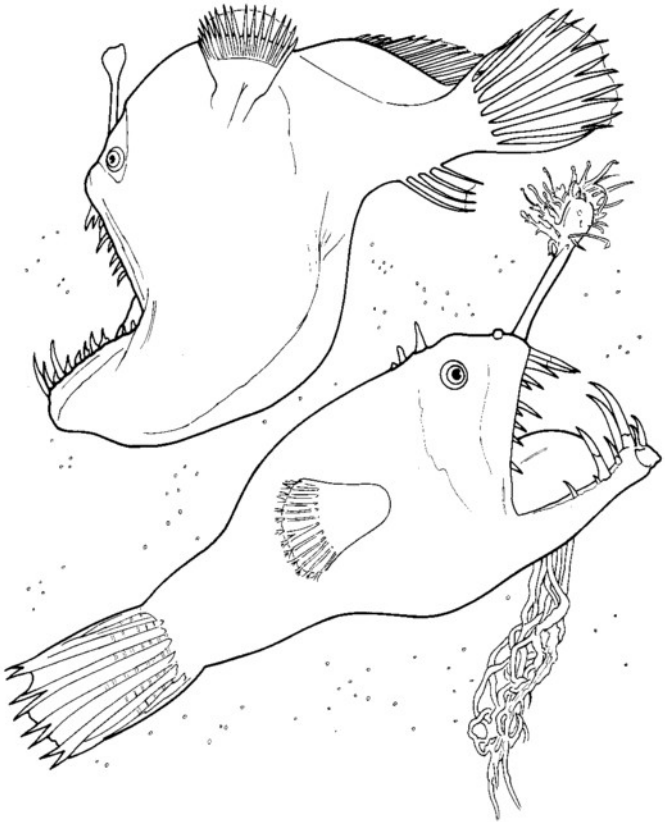


The **Whale Shark** *(Rhincodon typus)* may be more than 50 feet long and weigh up to 18 tons. It is the world's largest fish. Unlike the other members of its order of sharks, it does not stay on the ocean floor, but constantly swims slowly near the surface, feeding on enormous quantities of tiny plankton, which it filters through its gills. Whale sharks are found in tropical and subtropical oceans, including the Coral Coast area off western Australia, but one once was caught in a fish trap off the coast of Long Island, New York.

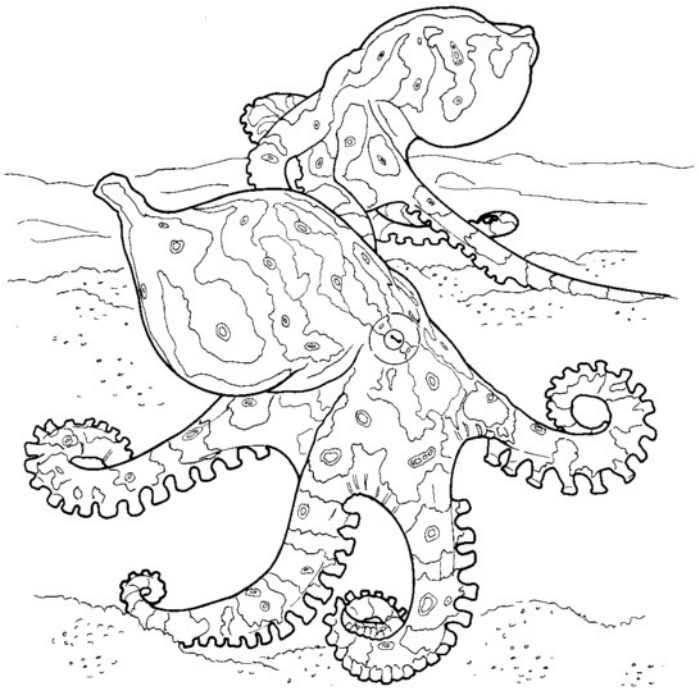


The **Matamata** *(Chelus fimbriatus)*, a large sidenecked turtle whose knobby carapace may be 18 inches long, lives in still waters of northern South America's rivers. It has a warty, triangular head, a long neck, a wide mouth, a long snout, and small eyes. Fringed, branching flaps of skin on its head and neck camouflage the turtle among underwater weeds. It walks along the river bottom, raising the tip of its snout above the water to breathe. To eat, the Matamata raises its head, opens its mouth, expands its throat, and sucks in its prey with lots of water. The water is expelled slowly; the prey is swallowed whole. A female Matamata weighs up to 27 pounds. She incubates her eggs for about 200 days.

The **Portuguese Man-of-War** *(Physalia physalis)*, a colonial hydroid commonly called a jellyfish, is not a single animal, but a colony of four kinds of small animals. Its body is a gas-filled translucent bladder, 3 to 12 inches long, tinted pink, blue, or violet. A crest on the bladder functions as a sail. Below trail tentacles that range from 30 feet long to enormous lengths. Their stinging cells paralyze small fish and other prey. This deadly predator lives in warm seas worldwide; sometimes swarms of thousands occur. The poisonous sting is very painful to people, but rarely fatal. One species of small fish, *Nomeus gronovii*, almost immune to the poison, lives among and eats the tentacles, which regenerate.



Lophius piscatorius, an **Angler Fish** species, lives in the Atlantic Ocean and may be 6 feet long. Angler Fish are bottom feeders in both shallow and deep waters. Their built-in "fishing rod" with "bait" attracts the smaller fish they eat. The "rod" is the first ray of the dorsal fin, extending forward from the head; the "bait" is a fleshy flap at its tip. The smaller ceratioid Angler Fish species, which live in murky depths far below the surface, where such lures would be useless, have evolved a longer, more flexible "rod" with a luminous tip, to satisfy their voracious appetites. These fish often have branched chin barbels—some with luminous tips.



The **Blue-Ringed Octopus** (*Hapaloclaena maculosa* and *H. lunulata*) is the only octopus deadly to people. The smaller *H. maculosa* species is common off Australia's southern coast. When undisturbed this small (5 to 6 inches in diameter) octopus blends in with the sea bottom, but when it senses danger it turns yellow and the blue rings on its brown bands become much brighter. This octopus often remains in tidal pools hunting crabs. It only bites humans when it is hurt or frightened. The creature's saliva contains two kinds of venom. One kills crabs. The other, tetrodotoxin, quickly paralyzes humans, who die, unable to breathe.

The **Giant Cuttlefish** *(Sepia apama)* is found only off the south and east coasts of Australia. It can grow to more than 3 feet in length and can weigh as much as 15 pounds. Cuttlefish rise or sink in the water by adjusting the volume of gases within their porous "cuttlebone," which alters their buoyancy. The Giant Cuttlefish is remarkable for its intricate courtship dance, which involves color changes and intertwining the tentacles of the male and the female. Thousands congregate and perform this ritual in unison during breeding season. Each female produces hundreds of eggs and lives no more than two years. After breeding, females die or float to the ocean's surface, exhausted, and are eaten by flocks of albatrosses.

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